

An Alignment-Based Approach to Arabic Verbal Templates

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Alignment (McCarthy & Prince 1993) has played a role in a number of recent analyses of Arabic templatic morphology (e.g. Ussishkin 2003, Tucker 2010, Wallace 2013) set within Optimality Theory (OT; Prince & Smolensky [1993] 2004) / Generalized Template Theory (GTT; McCarthy & Prince 1995). However, the driving forces in most GTT analyses (Ussishkin 2000, 2003, Tucker 2010, 2011, Kastner 2016, a.o.) have been prosodic markedness constraints.

In this talk, I show that deploying a more extensive alignment-based system, grounded morphosyntactically via the “Mirror Alignment Principle” (Zukoff to appear), can derive the morphophonological properties of the Arabic verbal system without prosodic constraints. Like all GTT accounts, much of the remaining ground is covered by basic faithfulness and markedness constraints, though here specifically linear markedness not prosodic markedness. The main additional piece of the analysis is a single lexically-indexed markedness constraint that drives irregular CV-sequencing behavior of certain affixes. This analysis thus supports McCarthy’s (1993) contention that the Arabic verbal system is not an instance of prosodic morphology, *per se*.